

Syllabus

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Office Hours: this course is 100% online; see communication policy below
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides a cross-cultural overview of the nature of health and healing in societies around the world, including our own. We will explore the various responses human groups have developed to cope with disease and illness. General topics include various cultural approaches to pregnancy and childbirth and to the definitions of “disease,” “illness,” and “the healer.” We will examine the ways diagnoses are generated and the ways various afflictions are treated. Lastly we will address the issues of social justice and medical ethics in relation to health and healing in different cultural settings. There is an emphasis in this course on the contrasts between western and non-western perspectives on the nature of health, disease, and on various types of healing practices. This course is especially relevant for students pursuing careers in the health and social services fields and who are also interested in understanding cultural and social diversity.

Prerequisites: SOA 101, SOA 111, SOA 113, or equivalent

Course Credits: 3 units

Required texts and technology:

Three required texts are available for purchase in the UMD bookstore; additional journal articles and book chapters will be available on myCourses free of charge

1. Jordan, Brigitte. 1993. *Birth in Four Cultures: A Crosscultural Investigation of Childbirth in Yucatan, Holland, Sweden, and the United States*. Fourth edition. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press.
2. Fadiman, Anne. 1997. *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux
3. Brown, Peter J. and Svea Closser (eds). 2016. *Understanding and Applying Medical Anthropology*, 3e. Routledge.
4. An active, functioning umassd email account and daily electronic access to myCourses

Time Considerations: The rule of thumb for college undergraduate courses is that students spend two hours outside of class for every hour in class, or *about* six hours per week for a three-unit course with no lab. Because this course is 100% online, we do not spend three hours per week sitting in a classroom. You are expected then, to spend that time reading and viewing films, and thinking and writing about the assigned material. In our online-environment then, my expectation is that you will spend around nine hours per week on this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to

- discuss how people in different cultures think about health, illness, and well-being; how human beings have experienced, interpreted, and made sense of the universal experience of illness.
- analyze how differences in culture and social power shape the nature of therapeutic encounters, who is recognized as a “healer,” and how “healing” takes place
- explain how scientific knowledge, financial interests, and cultural ideologies play into the process by which various physical, mental, and social conditions come to be defined as “illnesses” in need of professional intervention
- consider the ways in which social and economic inequalities, patterns of discrimination, and global location affect the health and health care of variously situated populations
- suggest ways that health and health care in developing as well as developed countries (including our own) can be improved

COMMUNICATION PLAN

This course is 100% online and so it is crucial that we maintain regular contact electronically. Here are my expectations for electronic communication over the fourteen weeks we will be working together:

- A discussion forum will be available each week, related to one of the Topics under Course Content, with a prompt designed to organize and focus our conversations. Discussion participation is mandatory and is graded. The period of time we spend discussing each topic is limited to one week, but **you must visit the discussion forum daily** as this is where most teaching and learning will occur. I will visit the forum to read new posts several times per day, seven days per week. (See full instructions below and in the Discussion Folder on myCourses.)
- If you have a question relating to the readings on that specific topic post to that discussion board. This way everyone benefits from your questions and the various answers that may be offered by me and by your colleagues.
- If your question relates to the course in general, please use the myCourses Messaging system, and click on "Select All" to copy your message to everyone in the course. It may be the case that one of your classmates will come to your assistance before me. Helping each other is part of our job here.
- Please use umassd email ONLY when the subject is of a personal and confidential matter. I check my email fairly obsessively, and under normal conditions you can expect a reply from me within a few hours. For this class I will be available weekends and holidays and will check all three of our communication systems regularly.
- Please DO NOT send assignments or exams via email. Appropriate submission procedures via myCourses will be given in detail below and with each assignment.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION AND EVALUATION

Readings and films: The readings and films are organized by week in the Course Schedule under one of six topics. In addition to the two texts you are required to purchase, additional readings will be available for download inside the Module of each Topic on myCourses. All films will be available in the Modules as well.

Study Guides: A study guide for each topic corresponding to a set of readings/films can be found in the Module inside each numbered topic under Course Content. Study Guides contain the key concepts you should know and questions you should be able to answer. They can "guide" you through the readings, help you identify key issues, inspire you to read critically, and help you analyze what you have read. Study guides themselves, are not turned in for a grade, but are a heuristic device—designed to help you review the course material and identify and focus on key concepts and themes. You should use the study guides to help you compose your weekly Summary Response Papers [see below]. If there are concepts or questions on the study guides that you find confusing or cannot answer, please ask for help in the appropriate discussion forum. That is precisely what discussions are for.

Discussions: Online discussion forums take the place of lecture-discussion periods in a face-to-face classroom and are an essential learning environment in this course. The goal of discussions is to share what we know with our colleagues, ask questions, help each other and learn from each other. Discussions are graded and constitute 30% of your course grade [see grading rubric in the Discussion Folder on myCourses]. The period of time we spend discussing each topic is limited to one week, and as noted elsewhere, **you must visit the discussion forum daily** to keep abreast of advances in our (hopefully collective) understandings of a particular topic. It is crucial therefore, that you read all discussion updates while the forum is open.

Minimally, each student will be required to contribute **one** original comment and respond to at least **one** other participant on each of the eleven forums, by the deadline indicated in the Course Schedule. A prompt, usually in the form of a set of questions from the readings or films, is provided to orient each discussion around a common theme. *Posting early is a good idea* as that allows more time for responses from me and from your colleagues.

IMPORTANT: Mistakes are a normal part of learning. Making mistakes on discussions will not affect your grade providing you come back and correct them. To correct them, **it is important that you create a new post**. One of myCourses idiosyncrasies is that "edited" posts are not marked "new," making it easy for me to miss your correction, especially on a thread with many contributors. To garner the highest grade possible then, please create a new post when correcting a previous one.

Participation on Discussion Boards: Substantive and active participation includes:

- sharing one's understanding of the assigned readings and offering insights that might go beyond the readings but were inspired by them.
- commenting on other participants' interpretations of those readings.
- trying out an idea you have related to a theory under discussion and asking for feedback.
- asking the instructor and classmates questions about the assigned readings if you are completely mystified or merely confused.

- challenging a point that another participant made in a respectful manner; offering a different perspective on a concept or theoretical idea being discussed.
- relating how you have applied what you have read and learned from the course to your personal or professional life.
- sharing other resources such as Web links, books, etc. you have used and found helpful.

Please avoid:

- Simply repeating or agreeing with others' comments.
- Yes or no responses.
- Uninformed opinions. The discussion board is not a forum for talking about how you "feel" about this or that. Simply expressing your opinions does not earn you a grade. Sociology and anthropology are scientific disciplines based on the works of the theorists we are reading. ***Your posts must be informed by evidence drawn from those readings.*** Discussions are intended to help you think critically and carefully about the ideas raised in each topic and may serve as a forum for you to try out your ideas, but your ideas must be informed by the readings or by critical reflection on the readings.

It goes without saying that all involved in course discussions must communicate their concerns and differences of opinion in constructive ways. Good communication takes work and your efforts will not go unnoticed. Respect for others does not mean that you remain silent; it means you acknowledge the legitimacy of different points of view while stating clearly your position, and the reasons you take such a position.

Post-discussion summary response papers. Students are asked to write ten short papers, one per week, that summarize that week's readings. Since there are eleven sets of readings you can skip one, although you will still be responsible for knowing that material for the exams. Summary response papers are meant to be short (3-4 pages double spaced) concise explanations of the readings and films that help you clarify your understanding of course material and draw connections between various topics covered in the course. They also allow me to give you feedback and clear up any lingering misconceptions or answer any questions you may have. The study guide questions can serve as an informal outline your summaries if you wish, but how you compose them is up to you. Summary papers are to be submitted each Saturday by 11:59 pm on myCourses.

Exams: The midterm and final exams account for 40% of your course grade (20% each). They will consist of short essay questions addressing each topic in the course. The midterm will cover the first half of the course, and the final the last half. They are not cumulative. You will have a week to complete each. I recommend that you hold on to your summary response papers, completed study guides, and discussion posts (corrected if necessary), and use them to help you compose short essays for the exams.

Semester grades will be calculated from the scores earned in class discussions, on the ten weekly post-discussion summary papers, and the two exams. The breakdown is as follows

Summary response papers x 10		30% of grade	
Contributions to discussions x 11		30%	
Exams x 2	20%	40%	100%

Grading scale

95 – 100		A
90 – 94		A-
88 – 89		B+
83 – 87		B
80 – 82		B-
78 – 79		C+
73 – 77		C
70 – 72		C-
68 – 69		D+
63 – 67		D
60 – 62		D-

Policy on late or missing assignments: Assignments submitted after the due date, with permission from the professor, will be penalized by 10%. Missing assignments will receive a grade of 0.

Incomplete Policy: According to the university catalogue, an incomplete may be given only in exceptional circumstances at the instructor's discretion. The student must be passing at the time of the request or be sufficiently close to passing. If the work is not completed within one year of the recording of the incomplete grade, the grade will become an F(I). The incomplete policy for this course is that at least 70% of the course must be already completed and an exceptional circumstance (i.e. medical issue) must exist. If you feel you require an incomplete for an exceptional reason, you need to email me, or the Dean of Student Affairs and state your reasons for the incomplete in writing. We will then decide on a course of action.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic Honesty: All UMass Dartmouth students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity and scholarly practice. The University does not tolerate academic dishonesty of any variety, whether as a result of a failure to understand required academic and scholarly procedure or as an act of intentional dishonesty. A student found responsible of academic dishonesty is subject to severe disciplinary action and may include dismissal from the University. The procedure for responding to incidents of academic dishonesty may be found in Section III of the Student Handbook.

Academic freedom is a fundamental right in any institution of higher learning. Honesty and integrity are necessary preconditions of this freedom. Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged and deemed appropriate by the instructor of the course. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the University community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses.

Maintenance of the standards of academic integrity and the successful administration of this policy depend on the mutual cooperation of faculty and students. Faculty cooperation is essential

for successful application of the procedures defined by this Academic Integrity Policy. Faculty members promote academic integrity by making clear on their syllabi their expectations concerning homework assignments, collaborative student efforts, research papers, examinations, computer-based infractions, and the like. Efforts should be made to detect and to prevent cheating and plagiarism in all academic assignments. If faculty members have evidence of academic dishonesty, they are expected to report such evidence promptly.

Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course. Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit. The intent of this policy is to make clear the standards of academic integrity at UMass Dartmouth. For additional information on violations, infractions, and consequences visit the UMass Dartmouth Student Academic Integrity Policy at the link below.

<http://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbookintroduction/studentconductpolicies/academicintegritypolicy/>

SafeAssign, is a plagiarism detection service that evaluates the originality of students' work by comparing their electronic documents to online sources and the SafeAssign databases. Students should be aware that suspect assignments (e.g., those without drafts, without works cited pages, or with large departures in style) will be submitted to SafeAssign by the instructor for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism. Submitted assignments will be included in the UMass Dartmouth dedicated databases of assignments. These databases of assignments will be used solely for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism during the grading process during this term and in the future. Students must provide an electronic copy of their assignment to the instructor for submission to the service when plagiarism is suspected, in order to receive a grade on the assignment and to avoid possible sanctions.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Center for Access and Success: In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me at the beginning of the semester and provide the appropriate paperwork from the Center for Access & Success, Liberal Arts (LARTS), Room 016 Phone: 508.999.8711.

Tutoring: If you are having difficulty with this (or any) class please contact:

- The Academic Resource Center (ARC) for support: Academic Resource Center, Liberal Arts – Room 7, Phone: 508.999.8708, Fax: 508.910.6404
- The **Writing and Reading Center in LARTS 220** will be open for face-to-face tutoring on an appointment basis while classes are in session. Students may visit the website at umassd.edu/wrc, call **(508-999-8710)** or stop by to inquire about hours or make appointments.
 - Access the online writing tutoring system by selecting the "etutoring.org" button under "Course Tools" on the home portal page, select "UMass Dartmouth" at the etutoring.org site, and then log on with your UMD password. Response time can

be up to 48 hours, so students must plan ahead for this mode of writing assistance.

Technical Help: If you are in need of technical assistance contact:

- The IT Service Desk, Claire T. Carney Library, lower level , 508.999.8884 (x8884) or via email. Hours: Sunday, noon – 2pm; Monday through Thursday, 7:30am – 2:00am; Friday 7:30am – 11pm; Saturday, 9:30am – 1pm.
- Students living in the Residence Halls may also contact the Residential Technology (ResTech) Support Center: Visit ResTech in Elmwood Hall, lower level Call the ResTech Help Line at 508.999.8040 (x8040)
- UMass Dartmouth has several ways for you to get technical support for myCourses.
 - **Self-Service Knowledge Base:**
<http://stuknowledge.umassd.wikispaces.net/Welcome>
 - **On-Campus myCourses Student Help Line**
Monday – Friday
8am-5pm
[508-999-8505](tel:508-999-8505)
myCoursesHelp@UmassD.edu
 - **Off-Hours and Holiday Help**
Open 24hrs
[888-989-7074](tel:888-989-7074)
umd.echelp.org